

Meditation with a Pet

Guided Meditation

Date / Time:

So far today, have you brought kind awareness to your:

☐

Thoughts?

☐

Heart?

☐

Body?

☐

None

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



MEDITATION

The term “loving kindness” can seem, at times, like something impossible.

When we feel stuck in negativity, anger or hate, who feels able to tap into anything close to love, or kindness?

Living in the age of social media, it's easy to assume that our fellow humans are perpetually blissful, and so filled with love that they've never known a bad day in their lives. This belief can feed our dissatisfaction with ourselves, and make the practice of loving kindness feel even further from our reach.

A teacher of mine suggests that when we can't access loving kindness, we can try “warm and friendly” instead. Animals can be great guides on this path. They live perpetually in the present, and never resist their own emotions. They can be amazing teachers of unconditional love.

This isn't a formal meditation, but more of an experience that can be done in the company of a pet. The animal doesn't have to be your own, but it should be one who's familiar enough with you to be near you, or better yet, sitting on your lap.

(pause...)

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Observe the feeling you get from this being wanting to be in your presence.

Notice what it feels like to be accepted exactly as you are. This being isn't asking you to change anything about yourself. It doesn't matter what you look like, how successful you are, or what mistakes you've supposedly made in your life. To this being, you are 100% okay, exactly as you are in this moment.

If the animal is touching you, imagine their contentedness or affection for you seeping into your body.

Picture it pooling directly in your heart. Be still with the energy of this pure being, who is simply existing here, right now. They have no worries, no preoccupations, no conditions.

As you stroke this furry being, experience the exchange of affection that asks for nothing in return.

Watch their body accept the pleasure of being patted, scratched, or held. If they are asleep, watch their peacefulness.

Take note of what you're experiencing in your own body as you consciously participate this exchange. Then let it go.

The more you practice this, the easier it will be to access in difficult times, when we all need a bit of loving kindness—or, at least, some warmth and friendliness.

